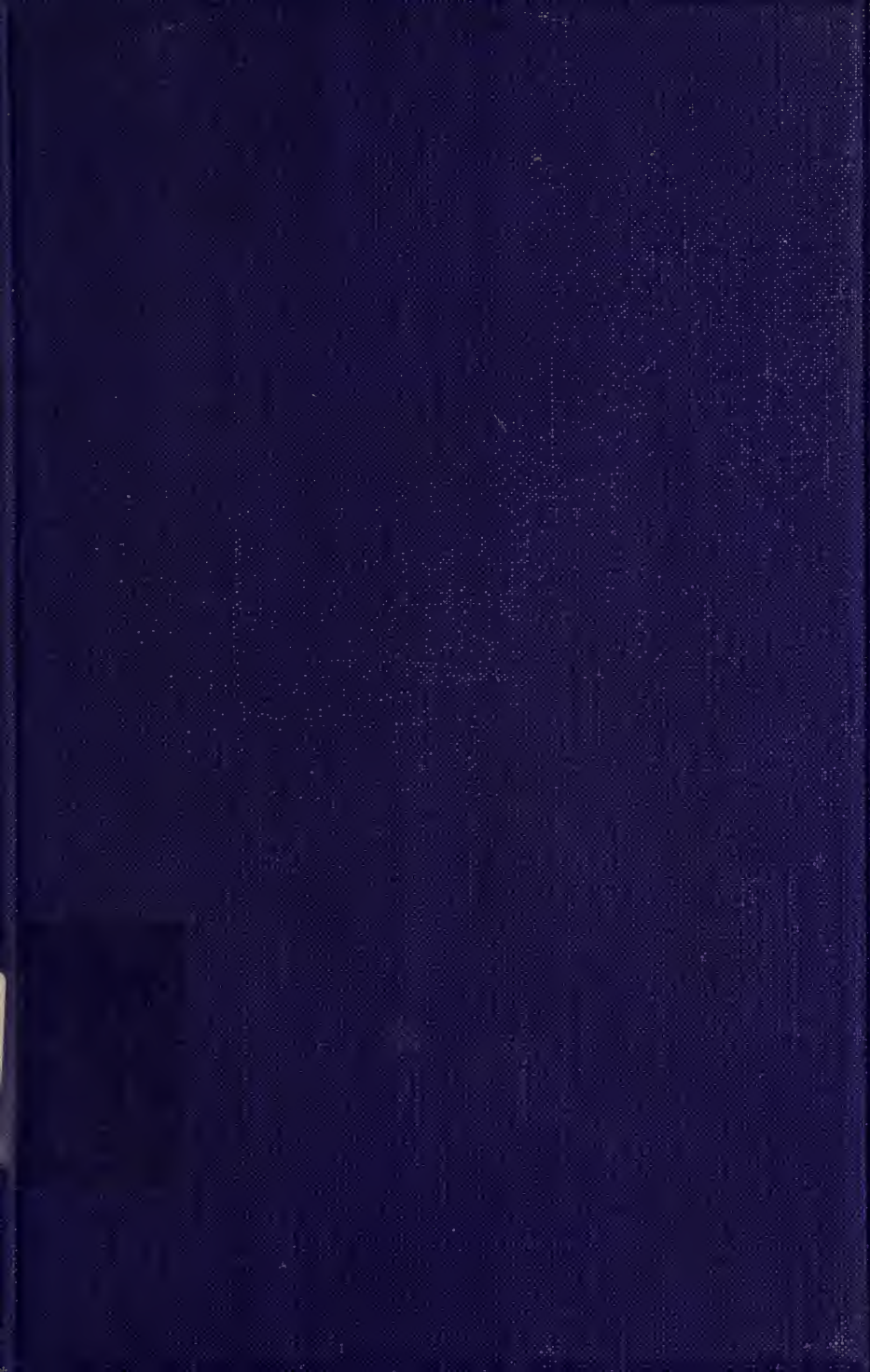




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The doctrine of the real
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THE DOCTRINE OF THE
REAL PRESENCE

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OF
THE REAL PRESENCE

BY

✓
THOMAS B. STRONG, B.D.

STUDENT AND CENSOR OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD ; EXAMINING
CHAPLAIN TO THE LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

NEW YORK AND BOMBAY

1899

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PREFACE

THE following essay is an expansion of a dissertation written for the degree of Bachelor of Divinity; and its aim is to explain as clearly as may be, what seems to the writer to be the original character of the Eucharist as it appears in Holy Scripture. It is plain that all subsequent doctrine upon the subject must, if it be trustworthy, depend upon its original purpose and meaning; the Church uses and interprets it, but does not claim to make additions to the ordinance as instituted by Christ. A development which is not provided for in the Scriptural presentation of the Sacrament is suspicious from the first. Hence it is of the greatest importance to define, if it can be done, the sense of the decisive passages in Holy Scripture. Little

more than this is attempted in the present work, though an effort has been made to place the passages when interpreted in connexion with modern discussion of the subject. The central point of modern controversy is found in the phrase, the Real Presence; and this has, therefore, been taken as the point of departure. It is argued that the language of the New Testament requires an affirmative answer to the question, Is the Presence of Christ in the Sacrament real? But it is pointed out at the same time that the meaning of this answer depends on the meaning of the word real, and that, for the definition of this idea, the analogy of Scripture is of the highest importance. Further, it is maintained that the normal mode of attaining the benefits of the Sacrament is by Communion, and that by so doing, individuals may be assured of receiving the gift of Christ's indwelling—a gift which depends upon their receptivity in the sense that they have power by sin to bar the entry

of Christ already present, and not in the sense that they have power by faith to evoke the Presence of Christ, independently of the consecrating acts of the representative minister of the Church. The fact that the Presence of Christ is *spiritual* is a reason for, and not against calling it *real*.

The attainment, through the Sacrament, of union with Christ and with the Church as a whole, is the ground of those devotional uses of the Eucharist, which are not particularly treated here. In the last discourses, our Lord speaks of the close union of the Apostles with Himself, to which He looks forward, when the Spirit comes after He has gone away. But this is not all. By union with Him the disciples are brought into relation with the Father Himself. They are, as it were, identified with Him, and occupy, in regard to the Father, a relation no less close than His. Because of this union they pray to the Father in His name with unerring certainty, and by means of it they

attain the supreme object of their being. The new powers of prayer and thanksgiving which belong to Christ's followers depend on this union with the Father through Him; the Eucharist leads to it, because through the Eucharist Christ comes to abide in those who receive it. Hence it is with good reason that the Church has fixed upon this Sacrament the association of prayer and intercession and thanksgiving. At that time more especially, when the Church performs its most solemn and characteristic act, we pray to the Father through Christ; not because Christ is, if we may venture to use such a phrase, localized on the altar, and therefore exceptionally accessible to our addresses, but because through the Eucharist we realize most fully our spiritual union with Christ, and exercise the privileges which belong to us in that connexion of access to the Father. Because we are caught up into unity with Christ we pray in the name of Christ, in the unity of His Body; and the Father hears our prayer.

ANALYSIS

CHAPTER I

THE Sacrament of the Eucharist is the centre of much doctrinal controversy.

This, though in some respects unfortunate, is inevitable ; as it is impossible to consider a subject of this sort fully without reaching some decision, though it is equally impossible for all to think alike.

The danger, which is a real one, of excessive precision ought not to forbid theological discussion and definition ; it does not become serious unless philosophical methods and principles which have been used as instruments in the theological discussion are converted into theological principles. When this is done the theological dogma involves the theological facts it describes in the fate of the philosophy used to describe them. A notorious case is the doctrine of Transubstantiation.

Theological discussion leads to confusion when there is not agreement upon the premisses really involved in the question. This is especially the case in regard to the Eucharistic controversy, in which the word ' Real ' is bandied from side to side without any precise idea as to the meaning of reality.

The confusion in this case results from too little, rather than too much philosophical analysis.

CHAPTER II

THE first requisite to a profitable discussion is an account of the evidence of Holy Scripture.

There are four accounts of the Institution. From these the following positions may be securely derived :—

1. Our Lord intended to found a permanent observance.
2. He in some way identified the bread with His Body.
3. The wine was in similar way identified with His blood, which is the blood of a New Covenant.
4. He lays emphasis upon actual participation.

The Institution is only fully intelligible in the light of the discourses in S. John, chap. vi.

In this scene our Lord reveals Himself as the Bread of Life in answer to the crowd, who having seen His miracle of the feeding of the 5000, challenge him to repeat the miracle of the manna in the wilderness. When pressed further by the Jews, He explains that the Bread of Life is His flesh given for the life of the world ; and lays it down as an absolute condition of true life that they should eat His flesh and drink His blood. Though not to be referred to the Eucharist directly, seeing that it was not in existence, this passage explains the principle, and accounts for the language of the Institution.

In 1 Cor. there are two passages of importance. In x. 14-21 S. Paul shows that the Eucharist fulfils the hopes which both heathen and Jewish worshippers had in their sacrifices ; through it men enjoy real communion with God. In chap. xi. he points out how sin prevents the realization of the effect contemplated.

A passage in the Hebrews (xiii. 10) places the Eucharist in connexion with the feast after the sacrifice.

A question arises at this point as to the meaning of the word *is* in the phrase, This *is* My Body. It is closely parallel to the use (characteristic of the discourses in S. John) of the phrase, I *am* the light of the world. These describe some permanent function of Christ by means of a convenient figure. Christ *is*, in fact, the light, &c., according to the various aspects of human need. Thus as He *is* truly our life, so the elements *are* truly His Body and Blood.

The Eucharist is thus closely connected with man's salvation. It is the pledge of the New Covenant, conveying that abiding in Christ, which is the foundation of all the spiritual consequences of accepting Christ. The gift is real, according as the salvation of Christ involves a real change of position, and is not a mere self-guided advance in morality.

CHAPTER III

THE attempt must now be made to explain how far the Eucharist is capable of being placed in relation with our other experience.

It is obvious that the Scriptural passages considered throw no light whatever on the mode in which the indwelling of Christ is effected by means of the sacramental elements.

A question therefore arises which is expressed technically thus: Is the Presence of Christ *objective*?

It is clear that in the Sacrament a gift is given which it is not in man's power to create, but of which the enjoyment

involves certain conditions. S. Paul speaks of sin as darkening a man's perception of Christ in the Sacrament; thus a negative condition is the absence of sin. Furthermore, it is clear that faith is necessary; it is important to explain in what way.

1. Faith is the primary condition of discipleship, and the Eucharist is instituted for disciples and appeals to them.

2. Faith is a power of realization or intuition: it enables the person who has it to respond, *e.g.* to the healing power of Christ. By its means the Apostles perceived the Risen Lord; by the same means we perceive His Presence in the duly consecrated sacramental symbols.

CHAPTER IV

WE must now ask what view or theory of Reality is implied by the Eucharistic doctrine as thus set forth.

The attitude of Christ towards reality, spiritual and material, is directly continuous with that in the Old Testament. Both worlds are treated as real, and there is no sense of difficulty in passing from one to the other. The opposition between spiritual and material experience is of modern growth, and is highly mischievous. It breaks up the unity of our experience, and by concentrating attention mainly on material experience throws suspicion on spiritual reality, and confuses the work of faith with that of the imagination. This last point is becoming untenable, since it rests ultimately on a philosophy of experience which is obsolescent.

Certain practical questions arise in connexion with the Eucharist, in consequence of its taking place through definite acts in definite space and time.

It is obviously necessary that it must be celebrated under such conditions as are involved in the existence of a visible Church, and the passages of Holy Scripture already considered give sufficiently clear information in regard to it as a whole. But they do not give us the right to determine accurately the effect of consecration upon the elements, altogether apart from the entire function considered as a whole. It is certain that those who attend in faith and holiness, and communicate, receive all that Christ promised ; it is not certain that the elements receive, for instance, such a permanent consecration as to justify reservation for purposes of adoration. For though this and certain other practices seem logically deducible from the certain meaning of Scripture, the logic belongs to sensuous experience.

The relation of this discussion to the history of opinion on the subject.

The meaning of comprehensiveness in doctrine.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE REAL PRESENCE

I

IT has often been noted as unfortunate that the controversy which is perhaps the acutest of those that vex the Church should centre round the Eucharist. This feast, which was ordained as the centre and rallying-point of the life of the Christian community, has proved in fact to be the occasion of sharp discussion, and the subject of apparently irreconcilable differences of opinion. It has become a common practice among those who deprecate this state of things to ascribe it to the baneful influence of theological speculation. If the Eucharist could only have been left alone, people say, if Christians could have had enough self-control to resist the

impulse to explain it, things might have been very different; it might have been possible then to follow the command of Christ with simple and unquestioning obedience, and the differences, which are mainly differences of interpretation and of opinion, could never have arisen. It is true that if this course had been pursued the present condition of things would not have been in existence. But it is too late now to consider the advantages of a non-controversial obedience; we have to deal with the situation which actually has come about, whatever we may think of the causes which have led to it. As things are, it is impossible to avoid taking account of the controversy, and that means trying to find a way through its tortuous paths. While it does not therefore seem desirable to abstain altogether from all theological treatment of the subject, it is important to bear in mind certain dangers which beset discussions of this kind.

There is the danger of excessive dogmatic precision. No one who enters upon theo-

logical discussion at all can avoid coming to some conclusion. He investigates the various opinions tenable, according to his lights: he balances them to the best of his powers in the strength of his previous education and mental history; and the result *must* be either that he accepts some one opinion previously held, or that he devises a wholly new one, or that he thinks the materials insufficient to produce a definite judgment. Whichever of these three possible positions he adopts, that is his conclusion—the effect of his intellectual reflection upon the facts at his disposal; and each of the three, when announced, is a dogmatic conclusion. Popular phraseology regards the statements *A is B* and *A is not B* as dogmatic, and the statement *There are not sufficient materials for deciding whether A is or is not B*, as un-dogmatic. But the distinction is untenable. The three statements differ in content, not in character: each of them expresses in the form of an assertion the result of the discussion of premisses and evidence.

Those to whom a theological writer ap-

peals have a right to expect that he shall indicate his own conclusions. They are not bound to accept them, of course; but the statement of the writer's conclusions makes it easier for the reader to estimate the value of the work: if the evidence is given as well, it enables the reader to judge of the capacity of the writer in collecting and weighing evidence.

But the necessity to form some conclusion does not depend upon the convenience of the reader of theological works: it arises out of the facts of thought. It is impossible to consider seriously any subject of importance such as this without reaching some conclusion of one sort or another—a conclusion, it may be, that is recognized as provisional, but at least a conclusion embodying in abbreviated form the information acquired by study. And the necessity extends beyond the professional theologian. Every one who thinks at all seriously upon these matters must have a "mind of his own" upon them in some measure; and in proportion as the mind of the indivi-

dual thinker is intelligent and instructed, so his judgment approaches the character of the theologian who is a specialist. Every one has his opinions; that is, every one expresses his beliefs in some form intelligible to himself. Such opinions are clear or confused, balanced or hasty, based on knowledge or on mere tradition, according to the mental habit and temper and opportunities of the individual. There may be danger of excessive theological precision even at this stage. Certain authors, and again certain individual thinkers, may persuade themselves that they can attain a greater clearness than is justified by the facts. Their mistake is their own, and is to be regretted; but it is not a reason for attempting the chimerical task of persuading the world not to think at all upon the problems of Theology.

The real gravity of the danger lies in another direction altogether. Questions such as these are liable to a special difficulty. The facts concerned are facts in the spiritual order of things; the forms in which they have to be

expressed belong to this present order. No one can pretend that human language and logic are adequate to express these transcendent truths; but it remains that these are the only means we have of expressing them, and that it is possible with their aid to devise statements which, though partial and incomplete, are true so far as they go. Again, theological expression is connected closely with philosophy, *i.e.* with the reasoned construction of experience taken as a whole. Philosophy endeavours to bring under the rule of one formula the whole of human experience; and theological expression is affected by the character of the philosophy prevalent at a particular time. It is here that the danger of excessive theological precision reaches its height. For philosophy changes, and thus the expression given to theological truth is in danger of becoming obsolete. Philosophy does not end in discovery like a branch of natural science; it does not produce new facts, which, when once established, are true for all time. It deals with experience as

it strikes the observers of a particular age or nation, and endeavours to embody the whole of it in one scheme. Experience has various aspects; sometimes one and sometimes another rises into prominence as the world goes on. At one time the whole world is considered from the point of view of matter, and the resultant philosophy is called materialism; at another time matter itself is expressed, so far as it may be, in terms of mind or spirit. And thus philosophical principles change from time to time; one age endeavours to correct the omissions and limitations of the previous one, and offers what purports to be a final and comprehensive view of things: until the new scheme itself has to give way before the criticism of the ages which follow.

If, then, a philosophical interpretation given of a theological fact is stereotyped, and asserted as an article of faith as well as the facts it expresses, a very critical position is brought about. The movement of philosophy is no way checked by the dogmatic affirmation, but the theological truth, which is in

reality independent of the philosophy, becomes involved in its fate. It appears to depend for its truth upon the permanence of the philosophical principles which interpret it, and this necessarily leads to error or unnecessary controversy. A notorious case of this confusion is connected with the doctrine now before us, the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist.

The theory of Transubstantiation is a philosophical mode of interpreting the words of our Lord at the Institution ; it is now affirmed by the Church of Rome to be *de fide*. But the system of philosophy out of which the theory rose is obsolete ; and hence the truth, once expressed in this form for a particular age, seems to be imperilled by reason of the radical change that has come over philosophical thought.

The charge of excessive theological precision is rightly brought against this doctrine of Transubstantiation, because it treats a philosophical expression as an assertion of theological truth. But it should be observed that the mischief arises not from the theological

speculation, so much as from the misuse of the results of theological speculation. The speculation may have been undertaken justifiably, and yet the dogma may be mischievous. If we were to admit, for argument's sake, that the truth of the Eucharist was most naturally expressed in this form at the time when it was put forward, it would still be true that to erect the philosophical formula into a dogma would be an error of judgment bound to affect unfavourably the cause of truth. This follows from the very nature of the progress of philosophy, which is not a movement of gradually extended dominion over facts, but a series of attempts at co-ordinating facts in the light of some one principle. Thus the final gains to knowledge arising from philosophy are not of such a sort as to permit the erection of any one formula, however persuasive and illuminating in its day, into a principle of necessary truth.

A second danger in all such matters lies in the mutual misunderstandings of those engaged in controversy. Every controversy really

depends more upon the premisses asserted or assumed on both sides than upon any arguments based upon the premisses; for it is often in this region that the real source of the differences lies. Terms carry a different meaning in different minds; that is, their latent associations are different, the philosophical assumptions consciously or unconsciously made in them are antagonistic. Then men differ about a proposition which is apparently the same for both, and are surprised and even angry at differing. They ought really to be discussing, in patience, the meaning of the terms they both use. Such controversies cannot be settled without bringing into clear light the positions assumed—what Dr. Martineau has aptly called the suppressed premisses. At other times both parties unconsciously take for granted some one principle and disagree over conflicting propositions, which are really, though not consciously, inferences from the position assumed by both. Here again the only hope of solution lies in an open-eyed discussion of the fundamental premiss. Till

this is done the debate is concerned with propositions of merely inferential value, and the really vital issue is never raised.

It is difficult not to feel that the Eucharistic controversy is a case of the second type. A theory of Reality is assumed by both sides, from which conflicting inferences are drawn. These are sharply debated without any apparent probability of a solution. One party strenuously asserts what is called a "Real Presence" of our Lord in the Sacrament. The other meets this assertion by the statement, "The Presence is not real, but only spiritual." It is obvious that this is no answer at all, unless "real" and "spiritual" are mutually exclusive terms; and it is probable that these terms are regarded as mutually exclusive, seeing that they are so commonly used as antagonistic.¹ On the other hand there are many who seriously believe that the Presence of

¹ Reference is here made, of course, to the language of popular controversy only; the Black Rubric in the Prayer-Book condemns the phrase "*corporal* Presence"—which can only be regarded as synonymous with "real Presence" on the assumption that all reality is corporal.

our Lord is fully real and spiritual, but who still use language that can only be explained on materialistic grounds. They draw crude inferences as to the Presence upon the altar at a certain moment: the Presence in the elements is adored; questions are raised, discussed, and settled, and practices built upon the decisions which assume the right to interpret reality in a particular way. It has already been pointed out that those who use the phrase "not real but spiritual" have a materialistic theory of reality as the hidden major premiss of their argument. The same premiss underlies the assertions of the other class of persons. Some of the inferences so unhesitatingly drawn, the practices so anxiously defended, can have meaning only if reality is a material thing, or if the reality which appeals through the senses is typical of all the reality there is. Thus the true issue turns upon the nature of reality, and it does not seem likely that even an approximate agreement in the controversy can be attained until this necessary preliminary question has been considered.

It is well to notice that this materialism is not the result of too much philosophical reflection, but of too little. It represents the ordinary views of men who do not reflect or build theories. To the ordinary man the knowledge that comes through the senses supplies the test of what is real. The "things" which he knows in the world around him are limited in time and space; they exist, as it seems, independently of him; his mind has merely to surrender itself to their activity in order to know. He is suspicious of allowing that there is any element of mental activity in the perception of reality: mental activity suggests the use of the imagination, and is akin to fiction. The ideal of true knowledge is, to the ordinary mind, the unmodified surrender to impressions reaching it "from without."

Now these assumptions are fairly satisfactory for the purposes of ordinary life; they describe fairly well what *seems* to be the process of our ordinary knowledge. But they will not bear examination. They can-

not be sustained under the pressure of criticism. Under such treatment they are found to be a casual and confused product of incompatible positions, involving, if pressed to their due result, a materialism that denies the possibility of real knowledge. In appearance, they apportion the work done by mind and matter in perception fairly and equitably; the world stimulates, the mind receives the stimulus and thereby knows. In effect, they accentuate the difference between matter and mind, and leave entirely without explanation the mode in which the alien matter is transmuted into thought.

It need hardly be pointed out that if such assumptions as to the nature of reality are carried into the region of Eucharistic doctrine many errors will arise. On the one hand, the recoil from materialistic inferences may lead to a scepticism as to any reality that does not answer to materialistic tests; on the other, the certainty, otherwise established, of the reality leads men to accept inferences that are certainly materialistic: and either is highly

unfortunate. At different times the one may be a greater danger than the other. But at all times it is desirable to criticize vigorously the premisses from which both tendencies result alike. An attempt to perform this task is made in the following Essay.

II

It is plain that any profitable discussion of the present subject must begin with a careful account of it as it appears in Holy Scripture. It is not, of course, implied by this that the Bible will supply a philosophical or theological account of the Holy Eucharist; but it is the final court of appeal in regard to the facts that need interpretation, and no account that may be given of the Eucharist can ignore the question of its character as instituted by Christ, and its position and associations in the early Church.

We must first consider the accounts of the Institution. There are four such accounts in the New Testament, one in each of the Synoptic Gospels and one in S. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians. Of these four,

that given by S. Matthew is closely parallel to the account in S. Mark; and again S. Luke and S. Paul lie close together. But there are some more considerable differences as between the two pairs of authors, S. Matthew and S. Mark on the one hand, S. Luke and S. Paul on the other. The actual differences, word by word, may be seen in the parallel columns given below (according to Westcott and Hort's text¹). The main difference lies in this: S. Luke and S. Paul use the words, given for you, or for you, of the Bread, and introduce the idea of the memorial (do this in remembrance of Me), S. Paul in connexion with both acts, S. Luke only in regard to the Bread. A further perplexity is introduced by the fact that S. Luke mentions an earlier cup, distributed before the Bread, in connexion with which he places the words about the fruit of the vine in the kingdom of heaven. These are added by S. Matthew and S. Mark to the words spoken with the

¹ See next page.

Ἐσθιόντων δὲ αὐτῶν
λαβὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἄρτον
καὶ εὐλογήσας
ἔκλασεν καὶ δούς τοῖς
μαθηταῖς εἶπεν
Λάβετε φάγετε,
τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου.

Καὶ λαβὼν πότηριον
καὶ εὐχαριστήσας
ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς λέγων
πίετε ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες,

τοῦτό γὰρ ἐστιν τὸ αἶμα
μου τῆς διαθήκης
τὸ περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυννόμενον
εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν.

Καὶ ἐσθιόντων αὐτῶν
λαβὼν ἄρτον
εὐλογήσας
ἔκλασεν καὶ ἔδωκεν
αὐτοῖς καὶ εἶπεν
λάβετε
τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου.

Καὶ λαβὼν ποτήριον
εὐχαριστήσας
ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς καὶ
ἔπιον ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες
καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς

τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ αἶμα
μου τῆς διαθήκης
τὸ ἐκχυννόμενον
ὑπὲρ πολλῶν.

λαβὼν ἄρτον
εὐχαριστήσας
ἔκλασεν καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς
λέγων

τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου
τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν διδόμενον
τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν
ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν.
καὶ τὸ ποτήριον ὡσαύτως
μετὰ τὸ δειπνῆσαι
λέγων

τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἡ
καινὴ διαθήκη ἐν τῷ
αἵματί μου, τὸ
ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐκχυννόμενον.

Ἐγὼ γὰρ παρέλαβον ἀπὸ
τοῦ Κυρίου, ὃ καὶ
παρέδωκα ὑμῖν ὅτι
ὁ Κύριος Ἰησοῦς — ἐν τῇ
νυκτὶ ᾗ παρεδίδοτο
ἐλαβεν ἄρτον καὶ
εὐχαριστήσας
ἔκλασεν
καὶ εἶπεν

τοῦτό μου ἐστιν τὸ σῶμα
τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν
τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν
ἀνάμνησιν
ὡσαύτως καὶ τὸ ποτήριον
μετὰ τὸ δειπνῆσαι
λέγων

τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἡ
καινὴ διαθήκη ἐστιν ἐν τῷ
ἐμῷ αἵματι·

τοῦτο ποιεῖτε, δοῦναι ἐὰν
πίνητε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν
ἀνάμνησιν.

¹ An earlier cup is described in vv. 17, 18.

Eucharistic Cup. But these, together with the question of the authenticity in S. Luke of the passage describing the second (or Eucharistic) Cup, are of textual rather than of historical or theological importance. The general drift of the passages is perfectly clear and consistent.

i. It is difficult to understand those who say that our Lord did not contemplate establishing a permanent observance. It is true that the words referring to this occur only in S. Luke and S. Paul; and it may be admitted that the words in S. Matthew and S. Mark do not definitely and in terms assert the fact. But there can be no question that the Apostles understood our Lord's action in this way, and S. Paul by the words with which he introduces his account of the Institution implies that he took this fact as well as the others from the Lord.

ii. There is no question that our Lord in some way identified the Bread with His own Body. It will be observed that in S. Matthew and S. Mark there are no words definitely

connecting this identification with the sacrifice of the Body. But the omission does not involve an essentially different attitude of mind. The distinct reference to the Body and the Blood in separation seem to point to the violent Death upon the Cross, as in the case of S. John vi. (see below). And though there may be discussion as to the exact meaning of the word *ἐστὶ*, and though, therefore, the exact relation implied will be difficult to define, it is difficult to avoid the conviction that some such reference is intended.

iii. This result is confirmed by the comparative precision of the words in regard to the Wine. The Wine is identified with the Blood shed for many, according to S. Matthew "for remission of sins." But this is not all. The Blood is the Blood of a New Covenant. All four writers express this clearly. And it is impossible to avoid the impression that a contrast is suggested between the New and the Old Covenant.¹ The participation in the sacramental Wine is a participation in the

¹ Exodus xxiv. 8.

New Covenant, just as the sprinkling of the Blood by Moses had brought the children of Israel within the range of the Old.

iv. Emphasis is laid upon participation. The words directly commanding it do not occur in all the four accounts, but the command is implied in all.

X It is difficult to conjecture what would have been the effect upon subsequent generations of Christians if we had been left to build our conception of the Eucharist upon the accounts of the Institution, without any illumination from other parts of the Gospels and from the history of the early Church. The phrases used by our Lord at the Supper are not in themselves clear. It is not said in what sense the Bread and the Wine are the Body and Blood of the Lord; it is not precisely clear in what relation the act stands to the sacrificial Death of Christ. And it is almost inconceivable that such an ordinance should have been made, unless the Apostles had been in some way prepared for it by teaching. Nothing is more striking

in our Lord's dealing with His disciples than the care with which He prepares them for the work they have to do. For this, within the lines of the Synoptic tradition, there is practically no preparation, and the act of Institution stands alone, without introduction or comment. The position of the Eucharist in the early days of the Church's life in the Acts and in First Corinthians is so clear and definite that it is not unreasonable to anticipate that some fuller teaching should have been given. In this light the discourses at Capernaum¹ are of the greatest importance. To them we must now turn.

It is vital to the right use of this passage that it should not be separated from the historical setting in which it is placed by the Evangelist. As it stands in the Gospel it is not a sudden and isolated dissertation upon Eucharistic doctrine, but a series of statements drawn out from our Lord by a series of questions and challenges.

¹ S. John vi.

The whole scene arises out of the miracle of the Feeding of the Five Thousand. This miracle seems to have been performed for the benefit of an immense crowd of pilgrims travelling to (or possibly from) Jerusalem in connexion with the Passover. The place and the character of the miracle recalled to the mind of the crowd the miracle of the manna in the wilderness; and with this recollection, the surmise became prevalent that this was the prophet that was to come into the world,¹ that is, the prophet like unto himself, whom Moses foretold.² Thus an element in the estimate of our Lord by the crowd was His power or failure to rival the miracle of Moses. On the following day our Lord is directly challenged with this comparison. What sign doest *Thou*, that we may see and believe Thee? . . . Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.³ From this point forward our

¹ S. John vi. 14.

² Deut. xviii. 15; cf. S. John i. 21, vii. 40.

³ S. John vi. 30, 31.

Lord steadily concentrates the thoughts of the people upon Himself. He begins by correcting their statement of the position.¹ It was not Moses that gave you the bread from heaven (nor was the manna the true bread from heaven), but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. Then when they ask with half-comprehending eagerness, Lord, evermore give us this bread, He answers at once, I am the Bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.² At verse 41 there is apparently a change of scene; instead of the crowd, the Jews take up the task of further questioning. They see the general drift of our Lord's assertion, and point out its difficulty in view of His known parentage and family history. Our Lord treats their "murmuring" very solemnly. He begins by tracing their lack of faith to the lack of the "drawing of the Father,"³ and then reiterates His claim. Verily, verily, I say

¹ St. John. vi. 32, 33. ² Ibid. 34, 35. ³ Ibid. 43-46.

unto you, he that believeth hath everlasting life. I am the Bread of Life; your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and died; this is the Bread that cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die. I am the living Bread that came down from heaven: if a man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever, and the Bread which I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world.¹ It has been necessary to dwell somewhat at length upon these earlier stages in the scene, in order to have the materials for interpreting the critical words which now follow. In the last sentence our Lord has touched a new point, and given a hint as to the mode in which He will bestow the Bread of Life. The Jews fasten upon it at once. How can this man give us His Flesh to eat? Following His usual method, our Lord answers this question by reaffirming His previous statement in greater detail. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink

¹ S. John vi. 46-51.

His Blood, ye have not life in yourselves. He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day: for My Flesh is meat indeed, and My Blood is drink indeed.¹ Our Lord then explains, in terms which foreshadow the teaching of the last discourses, something of the nature of this everlasting life. He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, abideth in Me and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he that eateth Me, he also shall live because of Me."² The discourse then closes with a reference to the subject out of which the whole discussion has arisen: This is the Bread that came down from heaven, not as the fathers ate and died: he that eateth this Bread shall live for ever.³

Various points emerge from this passage, which we will consider here. Our Lord identifies Himself with the true Bread from heaven, of which the manna in the wilderness was the type. Thus, while He regrets the narrow and

¹ S. John vi. 53-55.

² Ibid. 56, 57.

³ Ibid. 58.

carnal view of "the prophet" which the crowds hold, and refuses to submit to their tests of His claims, He really accepts, in a true sense, the application of the prophecy of Moses to Himself. Next, our Lord affirms the need of *faith* in order to the apprehension of what He is saying.¹ Further, He points darkly to the necessity of His Death in order to the communication of the true Bread: the Bread, which I will give is my Flesh for the life of the world.² And this point is driven more firmly home by the subsequent reference to the Flesh and the Blood in separation. Lastly, He defines in some degree the nature of the life which He promises. Its true form is the mutual coinherence of Christ and the believer: He that eateth . . . abideth in Me and I in him.³ Such life, beginning now (ἐχει ζῶν αἰώνιον), lasts for ever, and issues in the resurrection at the last day. Moreover, those who so eat, and in whom Christ abides, stand to Him, as He stands to the Father—the source of all life.⁴

¹ S. John vi. 35, 47.

² Ibid. 51.

³ Ibid. 56.

⁴ Ibid. 57.

We have insisted upon the historical circumstances out of which this discourse has arisen. It is obvious that it lies in such close connexion with them, that it would be manifestly wrong to affirm that the discourse is directly to be referred to the Eucharist. This Sacrament was not at the time in existence, and it is inconceivable that our Lord should have referred to it in these words. But it is equally true that to those who had listened to this discourse, and refrained from following those other many disciples, who from this time went away back, and no longer walked with Him,¹ the Institution of the Sacrament cannot have been wholly without a context. The words, This is My Body, this is My Blood, cannot have sounded altogether strangely in the ears of men who had already heard from the same lips, He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood dwelleth in Me, and I in Him. Even if in the sorrow of the parting the connexion was not seen at the time, it could not have failed to suggest itself, under

¹ S. John vi. 66.

the influence of the Holy Spirit's power to recall Christ's words. And we cannot hold the two scenes entirely apart. The account of them that seems to meet the requirements of the case is this, that the discourse at Capernaum lays down the vital principles of which the Eucharist is an actual embodiment. Life in the true sense is possible only in so far as men absorb into themselves the Flesh and the Blood—the full Humanity of the Son of Man. Faith is the general condition for this;¹ but no special indication is given as to the way in which the act of apprehension is to be effected. The Institution of the Eucharist supplies the need, in one transcendent way. The discourse lays down the principles, indicates the conception of life which our Lord assumes, and expresses fundamentally the relation of Christ to the world. The words of the Institution apply the principles, refer obliquely to the new order which is to characterize the New Covenant, and place the Sacrament in its historic position

¹ S. John vi. 47.

in regard to the Mosaic dispensation and the need of redemption from sin. The discourse moves among the ideas which are ultimate, and lie at the root of all God's dealings with men; at the Institution, Christ stands face to face with death, and thinks of the sins of men, and the methods of their Redemption. By participation in the Rite, the promised Indwelling is to be achieved.¹ A key to the interpretation of the whole passage is supplied, though in a partial and obscure way, by the comment of the Lord on their perplexity. In vague terms, which required the future to explain them, our Lord refers to His Ascension, and warns them that all interpretations which are bound

¹ It is probably in this way that the difference of expression in the discourse and in the account of the Institution may be partly explained. In the discourse our Lord speaks of the *Flesh* of the Son of Man; at the Institution He says, This is My *Body*. The difference (which may easily be exaggerated) is the difference between a general idea and the embodiment of it in a particular subject. The two words are respectively appropriate to their context, and the use of the wider word in the discourse does not modify the cogency of Christ's Institution of the Sacrament. The rite as ordained is the natural way of fulfilling the conditions laid down in the discourse.

within the limits of the flesh will fail. It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing.”¹

Thus far we have been dealing with the allusions in the Gospels before the coming of the Holy Ghost, and before, therefore, the rite had become an element in the life of the Church. When we turn to S. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians, we are at once in the atmosphere of an active though undeveloped Church. S. Paul's remarks are incidental: they are not in any sense a part of a theological discussion. He has heard of certain untoward occurrences and, as he so often does, he appeals to the teaching he has given them on the subject. The experience of the Church has already begun to be stored: there is a tradition to which appeal can be made; the effects of the Sacrament are beginning to be weighed and known. There are two passages concerned. The first (ch. x. 14-21) arises incidentally in connexion with the discussion upon meats sacrificed to idols. The Eucharist

¹ Cf. S. Aug. *ad loc.*

is compared by S. Paul with the general assumptions and professed effects of idol-worship. The idol-sacrifices, futile as they are, profess to establish a communion between the worshippers and their false gods. Their meaning lies in this: those among the heathen, who eat the sacrifices are partakers¹ of the altar, as in Israel according to the flesh; but heathen worship is all done to the honour of demons.² Such a relation with idols is incompatible with the worship of the true God. Those who aim at fellowship with demons cannot venture to claim the real union with Christ which the Eucharist achieves; "ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; ye cannot share the table of the Lord and the table of demons."³ The reasoning which lies at the base of this is stated in the previous verses. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion in the Blood of Christ? The loaf which we break is it not a communion in the Body of Christ?⁴ So

¹ κοινωνοὶ.

² Ibid. 15-20.

³ Ibid. 21.

⁴ Ibid. 16. R. V. margin.

far S. Paul travels but a short way beyond the words of Institution. But in the following verse, he makes a very important statement. Because one loaf, one body are we the many, for we all partake from the one loaf. The argument seems to be as follows.¹ The partaking of the one loaf does, as a matter of fact, unite us into one body; and this matter of fact requires as its explanation that the loaf is the means of communion in the Body of Christ. For ordinary participation in one loaf does nothing of the kind. The Church is the Body of Christ, in which all members find their life, and this life is made real and vigorous through the Bread and Wine which convey communion in the Body and Blood. The passage is one of considerable difficulty, and of no less serious importance. For it emphasizes in unmistakable fashion the function of the Church, as a whole, in the Sacrament. The success of the means used, if we may venture to use such a phrase, belongs to the corporate life of the Church

¹ Cf. Bengel *ad loc.*

considered as Christ's Body; and the union of man with man is achieved because all are bound together in the unity of Christ's Body. That which ancient sacrifices hoped to achieve, *i.e.* communion with the deity worshipped, is satisfied in the Eucharist. Men attain to true communion with Christ, because the Sacrament holds and sustains them in the unity of the Body.

In the following chapter S. Paul grounds certain teaching and exhortation upon the view of the Sacrament which the story of the Institution suggests. In the first place the repetition of the Sacrament is a continual shewing-forth of the Death of Christ; that is, a continual affirmation of the fact and of the importance of Christ's Death. But he has to do with a certain difficulty in regard to it. The Corinthians have misused it, and he is face to face with a problem which never appears in the Gospels—the problem of the unworthy receiver. In dealing with this new problem, S. Paul first of all cites the story of the Institution. This

indicates what the Sacrament actually is. He then proceeds to deal with the case of the unworthy recipient. Of him he says that he is liable in regard to the Body and the Blood of the Lord.¹ This somewhat obscure phrase seems to mean that such a person is liable for contempt of the Body and Blood. And this interpretation is borne out by the phrase which follows,² where the unworthy recipient is said to eat and drink judgment to himself, not discerning the Body. Sin holds back the mind from recognizing what is really there. The sinner sees, or acts as if he saw, mere bread and wine: he fails to apprehend the Body of the Lord.³

We have, then, in these passages of S.

¹ ἐνοχος ἔσται τοῦ σώματος καὶ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ κυρίου, xi. 27.

² Ibid. 29.

³ It has been suggested that the Body mentioned in this verse, is the Church and not directly the Body of the Lord in the Sacrament. It is difficult to believe that this is the true interpretation. Throughout the whole passage the words τὸ σῶμα are governed in their significance by the account of the Institution just given. There is no appropriateness in referring to the Church at this point; and τὸ σῶμα will most naturally mean in verse 29 the Body alluded to in verse 27.

Paul a specimen of the doctrine which was being developed under the pressure of the experience of the Church. S. Paul, as no doubt all the other Apostles, begins from the words of Institution. These form the final rule for doctrine. But in various ways S. Paul finds himself able to define the position of the Eucharist in relation to situations for which the original words provide no apparent guidance. Thus he sees that the Eucharist realizes all that men hoped to attain by sacrifice. He sees its close connexion with the doctrine of the Church as the Body of Christ. He notices the effects of sin (that is, of sin in general, not merely lack of faith) in destroying the power of the individual to discern what is patent to the eyes of the holy. As S. John lays down the conditions of true life: as the Synoptists describe the way in which these principles are to be made effectual: so S. Paul shows how the rite when established must be interpreted in terms of practical life. All three are necessary to a truly Scriptural doctrine of the Eucharist.

It is remarkable that the allusions to the Eucharist in Scripture are extremely few. The passages above discussed are in fact the only considerable texts bearing on the subject. This feature of the New Testament may be accounted for, at least in part, by remembering the incidental character of the books preserved in the New Testament Canon. S. Paul wrote his Epistles, not as theological treatises, but in reference to certain definite occasions. The condition of the Churches to which he wrote called for comment from him, and in his letters he deals with the questions which arose. Things which lie outside the immediate range of interest are ignored. Even the Pastoral Epistles, where the omission is, perhaps, slightly less natural, deal exclusively with the questions immediately before Timothy and Titus in the work of organization given them to do. Whether the disposition to keep silence about the Eucharistic service, which was characteristic of the earlier ages of the Church, dates from this time, and partly accounts for the omission

in the New Testament, is not clear. It is on the whole supported by an obscure passage in Hebrews (xiii. 10), in which an indirect allusion to the Eucharist may certainly be traced. The author is referring to some supposed deficiency in the Christian position. They are excluded, of course, from the sacrificial services of the Temple. The author reminds them, therefore, that they also have an altar, of which those who serve the Tabernacle have no right to eat. He then compares the Sacrifice of Christ to the sin offering, and calls attention to the fact that the bodies of animals thus offered were burnt without the camp. Christ, our sin offering, suffered without the gate, and we, who have to share in that sacrifice, must follow Him, bearing such reproach as may be involved in so doing. It is obvious that this passage refers to our participation in the sacrificial feast that follows and belongs to Christ's Sacrifice. Under the old conditions those who were concerned in the sacrifice declared their connexion with it by partaking in the feast which followed it. This is the

force of the word *φαγεῖν* in xiii. 10. We have an altar of which we, and we only, have the right to eat. In the continued life of the Church, the mode in which this right is exercised is through the Eucharist; through this Sacrament all generations of Christians claim their connexion with the one Sacrifice once made upon the Cross. Under the partial preliminary Dispensation before Christ, sacrifices were frequent, and the virtue of them was confined to those who were participating there and then, on each occasion. Under the new Dispensation there is but one Sacrifice, which, through the Sacrament, is made available for endless generations of men. It should be noticed that the allusion to the Eucharist in this passage is, as was said before, an indirect one; apart from the language of S. Paul in First Corinthians, already considered, it would hardly be intelligible.¹

The passages now discussed define the Scrip-

¹ The sacrifice of praise and liberality spoken of in verses 15, 16, defines the mode in which Christian men can be said to *offer* sacrifice; this is, of course, a different thing from partaking in a sacrificial feast.

tural doctrine of the Eucharist from various points of view. Before we inquire in what terms they may be summed up, it is necessary to consider a question arising out of the words of Institution. Our Lord says *This is My Body*. What is the meaning of the word *is*? It is true, of course, that this is an easier question to ask than to answer, and that the decision of it by means of an extraneous theory of Reality, prevalent at a particular time, has resulted in the definition of the dogma of Transubstantiation. We do not, however, propose to inquire whether this or any rival theory of Reality will satisfy the conditions; but whether the Bible itself gives any indications of the right sense to be put upon the word. It is plain that this is, primarily, the question of the use of a particular word in our Lord's language; and for this purpose it is indifferent whether He used Greek or Aramaic, and whether, supposing that He used the latter, the copula in that tongue is expressed or only implied. As we have not the Aramaic before us, the only method of procedure that is safely

based is to investigate the meaning of the Greek. It is commonly maintained that the use of the word *ἐστὶ* is strictly metaphorical; and, therefore, that it conveys no more than such phrases as "represents," "stands for," &c. In support of this, reference is made to a large number of phrases in which the same verb is used by our Lord of Himself, *e.g.* I am the Door of the Sheep;¹ in which, it is contended, none but a metaphorical sense is possible. It is then urged that those who wish to give a stronger sense to the verb in the words of Institution, should at least show cause, why the same word should be differently treated in passages of great external similarity. It cannot be denied that these passages are of the highest importance in interpreting the words of Institution, and we propose therefore to consider them carefully.

This use of words is characteristic of the discourses of our Lord as given by S. John; and within these limits it occurs some eight

¹ S. John x. 7.

times : references are given below.¹ If these passages are considered in connexion with their context, it will be seen that they all have one striking feature in common. They all describe some undeniably real and permanent character or function of Christ's by means of a metaphorical phrase which the particular occasion suggests. In the first set of passages from chap. vi. the occasion has brought up the miracle of the manna. Our Lord, therefore, in His endeavour to concentrate upon Himself the thoughts and the faith of the people, declares that in Himself the true ideal of the Bread from heaven is attained; I am the Bread of Life, the Bread from which eternal life comes. In like manner, the discourse upon the Fold of the Sheep is suggested by the excommunication of the man born blind. Christ concentrates

¹ I am the Bread of Life (vi. 35, 48, and cf. 41); I am the living Bread that came down from heaven (ibid. 51). I am the Light of the World (viii. 12, and cf. ix. 5). I am the Door of the Sheep (x. 7). The Door (x. 8); I am the Good Shepherd (x. 11, 14). I am the Resurrection and the Life (xi. 25). I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life xiv. 6). I am the True Vine (xv. 1, cf. 5).

attention first upon the existence of a true fold with definite conditions of entry, and a definitely organized discipline within;¹ and then when this is not understood, He answers their unspoken question with the words, I am the Door of the Sheep,² and later on,³ I am the Good Shepherd. Thus He affirms that through Himself is the one entry into the true society; and that He again is the upholder of order within it, the Good Shepherd; and, at the same time, lays down His Life for those whom He rules, every one of whom He knows.

In chap. xi. the same principle holds. Jesus says to the distressed Martha, Thy brother shall rise again. She, only half understanding and yet accepting the promise to the utmost of her knowledge, answers, I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day. And then our Lord again draws attention to His own position and power: I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that be-

¹ S. John x. 1-6.

² Ibid. 7.

³ Ibid. 11.

lieth on Me though he die, shall live.¹ The passage in chap. xiv. is interpreted on the same principle. Our Lord speaks of His immediate departure, and reminds the disciples that they know the way to follow. Thomas saith to Him, Lord, we know not whither Thou goest; how know we the way? Jesus saith to him, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. The two remaining cases, viii. 12, and xv. 1, do not arise so directly out of circumstances actually described, as those just mentioned. But it is probable that the former, the phrase I am the Light of the World, was suggested by the ritual of the Feast of Tabernacles, at which it was spoken; and that our Lord meant by it primarily to identify Himself with the prophetic typology of the ritual. It is possible that the other, the phrase I am the True Vine, may have been suggested by the symbolic vine which was built over the Temple porch and typified the Jewish Church. But this involves the discussion as to the place where these last

¹ S. John xi. 25.

discourses were spoken, into which we cannot enter.

Enough has now been said to indicate the general principle upon which these phrases are to be interpreted. In every case, some permanent character or function of Christ's is set forth, by means of a phrase expressing vividly the need which Christ supplies. And in every case the phrase is absolute; all set forth the absolute and exclusive sufficiency of Christ for all human needs. As God led His people through the wilderness of old by the pillar of fire by night, so Christ is the Light of the World. As Moses, under the commission of God gave the Israelites bread from heaven, so Christ claims to be the true Bread for all men: the unique and all-sufficient source of true life. As of old God brought a vine out of Egypt and planted it, so Christ is the True Vine; in Him is fulfilled the type of the Jewish Church, and the ideal of human communion with God. He is the Resurrection and the Life; it is not merely that He gives assurance of a

Resurrection to come at the last day; he that believeth on Him hath eternal life;¹ death has no power over such an one. In like manner, He is not merely one of many modes of entry into the flock of God, nor one of many guides; He is the Door, the Good Shepherd. In Him, all right rules of action, all truth, and all life are centred; for He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

It is, then, an inadequate account of these phrases to speak of them as mere metaphors. The metaphorical use of a word is based upon some part of its primary meaning; unless, as sometimes occurs, a variety of important meanings flows out from the first metaphorical use of it, its primary sense is the fullest and most real. In the case of these phrases it is the other way. They are an expedient for expressing in detail various aspects of a single transcendent reality—the absolute sufficiency of Christ for all human needs; and the metaphorical element in them belongs not to the copula but to the predi-

¹ S. John vi. 47.

cate. Christ is in fact what may be variously described, according to the various aspects of human need, the Life, the Door of the Sheep, and so on.

It is in connexion with this all-sufficiency of Christ to satisfy all the needs of man that we can understand, so far as human nature may, the words of Institution. Christ, who is our Life, has laid down absolutely as the condition of our possessing Life in any true sense, that we must participate in His Flesh and Blood. In the Sacrament, He has given us the means of so doing. In exact proportion as He *is* truly our Life, so the Eucharistic Bread and Wine *are*, by His command, truly His Body and Blood. The elements by themselves have no force to produce such a result; they represent the main constituents of the natural food of man; but under the command of Christ, they take on another function, and convey the gift which He regards as essential to our true life. They are more than mere symbols: they are *efficacia signa*, signs that are effectual;

they as truly do their part in making possible and sustaining the life in Christ, as Christ is truly the Life.

We have now considered as carefully as possible the main passages in Holy Scripture relating to the Eucharist, and the important series of texts in which our Lord expresses His universal claims. We have seen that the accounts of the Institution do little to explain the nature of the ordinance instituted; from the circumstances of the case it would not be reasonable to expect that they should. Hence the fundamental passage upon which we must rely in order to attain the Scriptural idea of the Eucharist is the discourse at Capernaum given in S. John, chap. vi. From the passages in S. Paul, and in the Epistle to the Hebrews, we have obtained light on several points. We see how S. Paul and the writer to the Hebrews placed the Eucharist in connexion with Sacrifice. We have seen how S. Paul deals with the question of the unworthy—a question which, from the nature of the case, could not

arise till the Church was already at work in the world. And again, we have seen how closely the character and effect of the Eucharist was connected by S. Paul with the union of Christian men in Christ. Lastly, the consideration of the important series of Johannine texts has given an indication of the way in which the copula may be interpreted in our Lord's words at the Institution, the reality implied by it will be parallel to the reality with which our Lord fulfils His function as our Head.

The results attained thus far are of the highest importance for the complete exposition of the Scriptural doctrine of the Eucharist. They show the central and comprehensive position of this Sacrament in the conception of man's salvation. It is not a subject of isolated and metaphysical interest apart from the general scheme put forth by Christ, but it is an integral part of the whole Christian position; the high importance assigned to it in every age of the Church's history is no more than warranted by the drift of Holy

Scripture. This fact emerges in various ways. In the first place, the Institution itself, coming when it did, was sufficient to stamp the ordinance thus established with an especial solemnity. But the same result follows from its doctrinal associations. It is the symbol and pledge of the new Covenant, in which the old Mosaic Dispensation was fulfilled. This we gather from the Synoptic tradition. But it is noticeable also that it stands in connexion with the most fundamental ideas in the theology both of S. Paul and S. John. This point requires further discussion.

First, in regard to S. John. We have already considered at some length the discourse at Capernaum, and we have seen that it supplies the principle upon which the Sacrament of the Eucharist is to be interpreted. And we have compared with the phrases used at Capernaum a series of similar phrases in which Christ expresses His claim to satisfy the needs of men. Now it is just this entire solution of all questions in Christ which is the fundamental note of S. John's teaching.

Christ is the Incarnate Word, in whom all the old order reached its climax; and He comes that through Him men may not perish, but have everlasting life. The achievement of this result lies in the abiding in Christ, of which so much is said in the Last Discourses. Various phrases are used to describe it, one of which—to be in Him—is closely parallel to the characteristically Pauline phrase, in Christ. The close of the First Epistle supplies a good instance of the Johannine language.¹ We know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding that we may know the True, and we are *in* the True, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and everlasting life. If we have been right in maintaining that the discourses in S. John vi. supply the principle by which the Eucharist must be interpreted, it is obvious that such passages as that just quoted are of considerable importance to our present inquiry. If it be true that Christ has laid down the participation in His Flesh and Blood as the condition of everlasting

¹ 1 S. John v. 20.

life, and that the Eucharist is the mode by which this participation is effected, it is obvious that any inquiry into the meaning of the Eucharist in Scripture must take account of the general doctrine of S. John on this point. If the abiding in Christ, and Christ in us, with the consequences which flow out from this—the knowledge of the Father, the right of access to the Father in prayer, the keeping of the commandments, the love of the brethren—if these constitute the description as we can know it of everlasting life, it is plain that the gift of the Eucharist must be explained in the light of them. It conveys, for our purposes, that abiding of Christ in us, which is the foundation of all the spiritual consequences just described.

The same measure may be applied to the writings of S. Paul. The critical ground upon which S. Paul justifies his interpretation of the Eucharist, is the unity of Christian men in one Body in Christ. This realized and effective unity is used by him as evidence that the Sacrament conveys a real fellowship

in the Body and Blood of Christ.¹ But admission into the unity of the Body of Christ, dwelling *in Christ*, living by His risen life, after dying to the old life and to sin, are the essential features in S. Paul's conception of Christianity. To enable us to attain to these results Christ came and died and rose again. Thus again the Eucharist appears not as an appendage or accident, but as an integral element in S. Paul's view of the function of Christianity. He does not allude to it except in this one connexion to the Corinthians : but it is plain from the language used that the doctrine he puts forward represents his current teaching. It should be noted also that the introduction of this idea of the Body means that the Eucharist is, in some sense, a function of the Church as a whole, and that it derives its meaning from its power to keep alive and display the life, not of individuals directly, but of individuals through the Body.

We are now in a position to consider the

¹ 1 Cor. x. 15-17. See above.

question of the nature and reality of the Eucharistic gift. Unless the whole interpretation we have given of the passages referring to it be erroneous in general and in detail, it must be now plain that in this Sacrament we have bestowed upon us a definite and real gift. Though by eating the Bread and drinking the Cup we do show forth our Lord's Death until His coming again, the whole action means far more than a mere revival of the memory of a past event. Instituted in close connexion with a past event, the occurrence of which it does truly commemorate, it is also an act which involves the whole meaning of the spiritual society which performs it. The question, therefore, as to the nature and reality of the gift bestowed in the Eucharist, is not one that can be treated in isolation. The Eucharist conveys, keeps alive, and sustains that spiritual gift, however it be described, which is promised to those who accept Christ; and the gift is precisely as real, and in exactly the same sense real, as the salvation offered us by Christ. If it conveys

real truth to say that the Church is the Body of Christ, and we are members in particular, then the Eucharist is the means by which that truth is made applicable to each individual soul. If it means anything to say that they only have life who eat the Flesh and drink the Blood of the Son of Man, and that in those who do this Christ promises to abide, then through the Eucharist Christ truly comes and abides in Christian men. If, on the other hand, these phrases are merely metaphorical, if they express in vivid and picturesque form the influence of Christ's example of love and self-sacrifice upon the conscience of mankind, then, no doubt, the Eucharist does nothing more than recall and strengthen this vague moral influence. But the two sets of ideas stand or fall together. In whatever sense reality is ascribed to the Church's purpose, in whatever sense the idea of salvation corresponds to a real change of spiritual position, and not merely to a self-guided advance in morality, in that sense reality must be ascribed to the

Eucharistic gift. For the Eucharist exists in order to translate into practical and daily experience, the principles which underlie the very existence of the Church. If it be asked, how most easily this gift should be expressed, the answer will naturally be, that our Lord's phrase given by S. John vi. 56 describes its most fundamental character: He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, abideth in Me, and I in him. The indwelling of Christ in the soul is the condition preliminary to all subsequent effects created by the faith of Christ, and this indwelling is sustained and quickened by the Eucharist. Or again, we might use the language of S. Paul. The cup which we bless, is it not a communion in the Blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion in the Body of Christ? We are members of the Body, and the Sacrament of the Body and the Blood is the continual means by which we are held together in this unity. To be in Christ is the essential privilege of the Christian: the Eucharist is the normal mode of claiming and exercising it.

III

WE must now pass on to consider some rather difficult questions arising out of the matter now determined. Granted that the Eucharist is the Sacrament by which the main purpose of the Church is translated into practical life, the question will necessarily be raised, whether the reality which, as we have seen, is conveyed by it, can be brought into relation with our other experience; what inferences, if any, can be drawn in regard to it; what conditions are necessary for the appreciation of it. It is clear that these questions are not only difficult but somewhat perilous, for it is in this region that the danger is at its height, of forcing philosophical or other associations upon the statements of Holy Scripture. Hitherto, we have considered to the best of our powers the

interpretation of particular passages, and the relation between different passages. In the succeeding inquiry we shall not have the guidance of definite Scriptural statements bearing immediately on the one side or the other; we shall have to depend partly on principles already established, partly on the analogy of similar cases. Decisions reached on grounds such as these have various degrees of cogency. It is inevitable, as already pointed out, that questions such as these should be raised; and it is reasonably probable that some answers will be more fully in harmony with the language and drift of Holy Scripture than others.

We have said that the measure of the reality of the Eucharistic gift is to be found in the reality of the Body of Christ, and the purpose which it serves in the world. The Eucharist is the true means by which God's purpose in the Church is made effective. This conclusion assures us that those who fulfil any conditions there may be in regard to the Eucharist, are in the fullest sense recipients

of God's promises in Christ. They eat the Flesh and drink the Blood of the Son of Man; they abide in Him and He in them. Can we learn anything further in the way of affirmation or negation as to the mode in which this reality is conveyed?

1. In the first place, it is clear beyond all doubt, that the words we have discussed so far throw no light whatever on the way in which the Indwelling of Christ is effected by the sacramental elements. We do learn that, as a fact, it is effected by this means. But the fact is asserted with so great a reserve, that, not only is nothing told us about the Substance and Accidents of the Bread or of the Thing signified thereby, but we do not even know whether the whole conception of Substance and Accidents may not be entirely irrelevant to the subject. Indeed, the probability is that it is thus irrelevant. The ideas of Substance and Accidents take their origin in the analysis of our perceptions of the external world, and with these perceptions they are associated. They apply to, or perhaps

more truly, they were once thought to explain the manifestation of the realities which exist in the world of space and time. But it is not likely, however real the sacramental gift may be, that the Body and the Blood therein received are in any sense subject to these limitations. The words of Christ to His disciples, who were puzzled by His hard saying at Capernaum, seem to exclude directly any such idea. The reference to the Ascension, the assurance that it is the Spirit that quickeneth, take the whole matter out of the reach of material associations and carnal tests. We shall certainly, therefore, be not only departing from the text of Holy Scripture, but departing from it unwarrantably and against its drift, if we attempt to define the relation which subsists between the sacramental elements and that which they convey.

2. But, next, if the mode in which the Indwelling is conveyed is hidden, a question may be raised as to the objectivity of the Presence of Christ. This is the technical name for a very serious question. Stated in

this form, no doubt, the question is merely a philosophical one. That is *objective* which exists by its own right, as it were, independently of the observer. Hence, in the present connexion, the question will mean whether the Presence of Christ exists, so to speak in the Sacrament, independently of the receiver. And this, though it seems a simple question, contains within it several of great importance. For it requires that we should decide what contribution, if any, is made by the receiver to the whole result. And this is a matter of some complexity.

We may remark, first, that the passages we have been considering give a certain amount of indication of an answer. It is clear that the effect of the Eucharist is a *gift*, it is not a thing which a man can count on commanding, in his own right, and in the force of his own will. The elements in the Sacrament have no natural right to convey so tremendous a power; at the most, they typify the natural food of man. And man cannot, by any unaided operations of his own,

fit them for their spiritual service. On the other hand, the gift is one which it is quite possible to miss. This is the lesson of S. Paul's remarks upon those who receive unworthily. They come, like other men, and pass through the same outward acts, but they eat and drink judgment to themselves, because they do not discern the Body. Men have, apparently, the power to close their eyes to their Lord, and when they do so, they are judged—they write themselves down unworthy.

It is clear, then, so far, that there is a Gift given in the Sacrament which it is not in man's power to create; but that, at the same time, certain conditions are necessary to the perception and enjoyment of this Gift. Let us consider what these may be. In the passage in First Corinthians S. Paul speaks of receiving unworthily. When we look at the context to ascertain what is the nature of this failure, we find that he is condemning sins of selfishness and sensuality. These are among the barriers with which a

man may darken his spiritual vision. We may fairly assume that any other sin would have the same effect. But it is frequently said that the essential condition to the realization of the presence of Christ is faith; we must now examine this statement.

It is noticeable that the function of faith in connexion with the Eucharist is less distinctive than much popular language would lead us to suppose. It is natural that there should be no allusion to it in any of the accounts of the Institution. Our Lord speaks to His disciples as believers: the Last Supper is indeed the highest moment of their faith in Him. Again, S. Paul in the passage just mentioned, says nothing of lack of faith as a cause of not discerning the Lord's Body. Doubtless, lack of faith in one who was in a position to approach the Lord's Table would be a sin, like sensuality or selfishness. But it is not so distinctive a cause of failure as to be selected for special treatment out of all others. In the passage in S. John vi. there is a differ-

X
ence. There are three verses of importance to us here (40, 47, 54). In the first of these, our Lord states that the final aim of the Father is that "every one who beholds the Son and believes on Him, should have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." In the second passage, explaining the cause of the Jews' failure to understand Him, He continues: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth hath eternal life." In the third passage, precisely this result is attributed to the partaking of the Bread of Life: "He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." It is, of course, this series of passages that has inspired S. Augustine's well-known phrase, *Crede et manducasti*. And it is not surprising that it has seemed possible in view of them to identify the act of faith with the participation in the Flesh and the Blood. But such an identification must not be made absolutely without due caution. To assert it absolutely, would

mean nothing less than the abolition of the Sacrament. If by faith the whole process of participation were completely fulfilled, then it is inexplicable that Christ should have proceeded to found a special ordinance in such terms as those of the Institution. This is entirely independent of any cases that may arise, in which the soul has to satisfy itself without any sacramental media. These are exceptions, and the discourse and the Institution deal with the normal order of things. Christ's commands define the regular condition of Christian men; exceptions have to be dealt with later by the inherent power of the Church. It is in this connexion that the difficulty, such as it is, may be met. Our Lord at the Institution addresses those who are already disciples; for these, and these alone, the Sacrament was instituted; it embodies the fundamental principle of discipleship. Faith, on the other hand, is the condition of discipleship itself, and of all action as a disciple, just as life in the physical sense is the condition

of all manifestation of physical energy. If it be true that the possession of faith is to have everlasting life, it is true also, that those who live in the society which Christ founded will find that their complete fulfilment of the conditions named by Christ involves obedience to the command which He addressed to them. They eat the Flesh of Christ when they partake of His Body. Faith is assumed in them as disciples; they have to keep themselves from evil things, selfishness and sensuality, for instance, which destroy their participation quite as completely as a lack of faith.

So much, then, is clear; there is in the Eucharist a gift given, of which the true nature is the Indwelling of Christ; it is a gift to the free passage of which sin of various kinds can place obstacles; and faith is the condition of that relation to Christ which makes the gift possible. We must now inquire what evidence the New Testament supplies as to the function and powers of faith. It is plainly a power of realization

or intuition. That is to say, facts and powers become obvious to faith, which are wholly imperceptible or inoperative without it. Thus in the case of our Lord's appearance upon earth it was faith that realized first obscurely, but then with gradually increasing clearness, the presence of a Divine Power in a wholly new and distinctive manner. This was the way in which the faith of the disciples grew. They were first attracted by gracious words, or amazed by wondrous acts, and they came to know by degrees more exactly and more articulately the full meaning of their first interest. Their perceptions find their climax in the Prologue to S. John's Gospel ; the Doctrine of Christ as the Word of God sums up the continually developing intuitions of faith. In like manner faith liberates the miraculous powers resident in Christ. Where there is no faith, He works no miracle. Where faith is feeble and incomplete He takes measures to draw it out and develop it ; and the miraculous power takes effect when this process is complete. But again, there are differences in

the types of faith. The complete and passive self-surrender which yields itself to the Lord's power, and is freed from bodily disease, is not like the faith of S. Peter, nor is it dignified in the same signal way. One person has the faith to be made whole, another has the faith upon which a Church can be built. The latter is more penetrating, more enlightened, more articulate. And again, the faith that liberates miraculous power is in some cases exercised vicariously. The centurion who pleads for his absent son is the person to whose faith the miracle is a response. These various types belong to the time previous to the resurrection. After this a still more striking change takes place. Hitherto Christ has appeared more or less promiscuously. He has moved about in Palestine and made trial of various classes and various individuals. Some have believed and some have refused belief. He has faced opposition and held sharp discussion with angry and hostile Pharisees. Latterly He has drawn away more and more from the crowds, and avoided their unprogressive

wonder; and has confined Himself more and more to the small band of more intelligent followers. After the resurrection from the dead this later plan displaces altogether the former one. With the single exception of S. Paul there is no record of His appearing to any one except the members of His Church.¹

¹ It is not necessary to discuss the case of S. Paul at length. Many suggestions might, of course, be made by way of explaining it. There can be no doubt that it is a marked and decisive exception; at the time S. Paul was no less hostile than the priests or the Pharisees, and apart from his later career we cannot see why he should have been chosen in this way rather than one of them. We might recall the fact that such vehement hostility frequently conceals a doubt of the position so passionately defended; that the impulse to persecute sometimes covers self-distrust. Or we may imagine with Pfeiderer that S. Paul was really impressed with Christian teaching, but was held back by the belief that to die upon the Cross involved the curse of God; * so that the conviction of Christ's resurrection would at once cause a subversion of his whole previous position. But all these suggestions, however ingenious, are conjectural. And they are not really necessary. To admit that S. Paul's case was an exception unparalleled in the New Testament records, is simply another way of saying that after the resurrection, Christ's appearances are almost invariably to those who are already disciples.

* Cf. Gal. iii. 13.

The gift of intercourse with the risen Lord is Christ's response to the faith of His Church. It is assured to those who are disciples, with whom He dwells continually till the end of the world.

In all these cases the faith on the part of the disciple or person in need of help, is a power of realization. It enables the faithful person to recognize the presence of the Divine in Christ, to surrender himself to the powers of healing which he believes to exist in Christ. It is, of course, a mental state on the part of the person who possesses it: the presence or absence of faith differentiates one man from another. But it is more than a mere mental state: it does not create the presence and the power to which it is related; it enables the individual to come into the right relation with a presence or a power that is there independently of him. Those who saw the Divine in Christ, saw what was really there: Christ was divine, and their faith enabled them to grasp the fact. His bodily presence was not a symbol of the existence of

God elsewhere which their faith interpreted : it conveyed the assurance of the actual presence of the Divine Word ; just as the bodily presence of another human being is not the symbol but the vehicle of his personality. The lack of faith suspends this power of intuition, and leaves men to the inferences of physical perception. The assembled Apostles, again, perceive with the aid of their faith as disciples, the presence of the risen Lord. They do not imagine it ; it is not to them a way of expressing a belief in immortality to say that the Lord is risen and has appeared : it is to them an assertion of a fact, as concrete as any other ; they see the risen Lord, because He is there. The same is true of the miracles of healing. The faith is of value because the power of Christ is actually there. Faith does not imagine, still less does it create the healing power ; it recognizes its existence and yields to it. The lack of faith simply shuts out the operation of the power, it does not otherwise affect the situation.

Thus there is, always, it would seem, a

personal factor in that which faith apprehends: in other words, the reality actually present is not perceived without the peculiar apprehensiveness that we call faith. And thus a situation arises that at first sight seems to cause perplexity. The same event may produce totally different impressions on different people. Caiaphas and S. John looking upon our Lord take totally different views of what they see: not because they do not see the same things, but because one has, and the other lacks, the intuitive power of faith. It is easy to say, therefore, that the perception of the one is a view of the case peculiar to himself—something added to the real facts, which every one perceives, by his own creative power. But this would be an error. The perception of S. John attains the true reality—reality which is actual whether this or that individual perceives it or not—though it is true that a perceptive capacity is necessary for the purpose.

We must now return to the question of the Eucharist. We have seen that Christ

laid down as the necessary condition of life in Him, faith, and the participation in His Flesh and Blood. For the purposes of His Church, *i.e.* for His faithful people united in His Body, the Eucharist is the natural mode of fulfilling this condition. Through it, in accordance with His promise, He comes to those who fulfil His command. And His coming is now as it was of old. He remains the same, and offers Himself to those who have faith to see and welcome Him; but the lack of faith or any other sin can block the entrance of the soul and exclude Him. But this is not quite all that may and must be said. There are two marked and important distinctions to be kept in view. In the first place, there is the distinction between the Lord's appearances before and after the resurrection. The earlier manifestations were made promiscuously, at first, for as yet the Body which was to be the repository of the witness to Him did not exist. The Lord reveals Himself more fully to the fuller faith of the disciples, but He also moves about as a

man among men ; individuals cross His path, are attracted and fall away, and He deals with them one by one. This ceases after the resurrection ; with the exception already mentioned, the risen Lord appears only within the circle of the faithful. And then, secondly, after the Ascension He appears no more in the form by which men had known Him upon earth : He comes in the sacramental Bread and Wine. And this is, in a sense, a precarious mode of approach. Not all bread or all wine convey the Indwelling Presence of Christ ; only the cup of blessing which we bless, the bread which we break are a communion in the Blood and the Body of the Lord. And this means, as the context shows plainly enough, that the solemn blessing and the breaking, which make the difference between common bread and wine, and effectual signs of the Body and the Blood, are acts of the Society, and not of chance individuals here and there. It is the faith of the Church, in response to which the Lord comes to meet His followers in the sacri-

ficial Feast that rises out of the one sacrifice. Individuals, who may be present, laden with sin, or feeble in faith, may fail to discern the Lord's Body, though it is verily and indeed there. But those who are faithful imagine nothing that is unreal, nor do they simply put a high meaning upon dead symbols; they merge themselves in the faith of the whole Church, and receive with the appointed sign the spiritual gift which Christ has promised. If we may use the technical phraseology already mentioned, the gift is objectively real, in the sense that its existence is independent of the mental attitude of any human being; but it is wholly spiritual in its reality, and may be made impossible by spiritual conditions of a vicious kind.

IV

WE have now considered the passages in Holy Scripture, which refer to the subject before us, individually and in combination. Unless the discussion of them has been wholly misdirected, we have learnt some very important truths. It is clear, beyond all doubt, that the Sacrament conveys a real spiritual gift; that it is the natural and appointed mode of receiving this gift; and that from this point of view it falls into its place in the account of Christ's work and teaching, and harmonizes in principle with other acts and claims of His. Moreover, it is clear that in all the allusions and references to it, there is not any sign of justification for applying, to the reality of its gift, tests or associations that depend on a material view of what is real. The reality assigned to it is

in the same class as the reality of the Body of Christ, the Church; and the mode of appreciating it is the same as that which was required when Christ was upon the earth. In the course of the discussion it has been necessary to touch upon one phrase belonging to technical theology—the Real Presence—but we have, so far, made no attempt to place the doctrine as we read it in Holy Scripture in connexion with modern thought and devotional language. This attempt must now be made.

The first questions are, of course, concerned with the meaning and analogies of Reality, as it seems to be conceived in Holy Scripture. When we say that the gift is real, what do we mean? Does Holy Scripture offer any indication of a particular view of reality? Throughout the Bible there is a general assumption of the reality of spiritual things, without any attempt to define what this means. Thus there is no doubt that the prophets considered themselves under the direct commission of God; in certain cases a

historical moment is fixed at which the inspiration began. But at other times the fact is simply assumed and no further account given. Again, the whole Book of Psalms assumes the reality of the most varied and intimate relations with the God of Israel; the series of spiritual experiences is as definite and precise as those of the daily secular life. There is no idea of conflict between the types of reality represented by the data of sense, and those of the spiritual life; nor is there any sense of difficulty in adjusting the one to the other. The assaults of scepticism, so far as there is any sign of them in the Old Testament, are aimed at the general plan by which God administers the world; not at His existence, or His power of communicating with men. They are at the acutest in the pessimism of the Preacher: but there is no suggestion in that gloomy book of any doubt as to the existence of God and of the wisdom, at least, of adhesion to the moral law.

When Christ came, He speaks largely in

this language, or, at least, in terms which the Old Testament religious language makes partly intelligible. It is easy, comparatively speaking, to understand His speaking as He did to a Jewish audience, because, though the words were new and the ideas sometimes startling, they were not entirely out of harmony with their surroundings, as they would have been in Athens or in Rome. The Fatherhood of God may have been strange to His hearers, but not the religious attitude to which it belongs. In a word, our Lord's directness of speech in spiritual matters was the highest example of the habit of mind with which every reader of Psalmist or Prophet must have been familiar. And in Christ's language, as in the Old Testament, there is not the slightest sense of any possibility of doubt, or any difficulty in adjusting natural knowledge to the knowledge of the spiritual world. The natural world is used to convey spiritual truth, as in the Old Testament, and it is tacitly assumed that one law regulates both orders, natural and spiritual. The certainty is greater,

the confidence with which assertions are made in regard to spiritual things is more authoritative, but the religious attitude is continuous with that of the old Hebrew inspired seers.

✓ The Institution of the Eucharist and the language used about it lie within the range of these associations. Christ speaks simply and directly of the spiritual life, and makes it perfectly plain that it is this which is His chief interest. He has to face materialism; people have interpreted type and prophecy in a narrow materialistic way. But it is curious to notice how entirely He leaves aside all discussion of principles of interpretation. He teaches by examples, drawn from the material world, but so various that it would be impossible to mistake the material image for the important truth. Or He presses home His points in language increasingly startling, as in the discourses in S. John, chap. vi., of which we have already heard so much. And He expects to be understood. His method is the right one for people in the right frame of mind; only those who have no hold on the

easy Hebrew habit of passing imperceptibly from this world to the other, can fail to understand. And they have failed to learn the lesson of the preparatory Dispensation. Those who had not failed would understand, or, at least, be on the way to understand, the Indwelling of Christ, the partaking of His Body and Blood, and, as in the old Dispensation, their experience would verify their beliefs.

It is obvious that if this be true, the modern shyness of the word spiritual, as implying possible unreality, is quite alien from the spirit of the New Testament, and indeed of the Bible as a whole. In the Bible, spiritual things are as obviously real as earthly things, as obviously near at hand; in modern thought the type and test of all reality is found in the ideas of their ordinary experience which ordinary men have, and the spiritual world is a hazy region lying "outside" the bounds of this world's immediate knowledge. It seems almost absurd, a fantastic amusement of philosophers, to discuss the reality of the external world; but we discuss the reality of the

spiritual world as readily and naturally as we discuss the existence of ghosts. It would be interesting, if it were relevant, to set out the history of this change in point of view; we are only concerned with it as it affects the doctrine of the Eucharist.

It is manifest that the whole question of the Eucharistic gift is very seriously affected by it. If it be assumed, consciously or unconsciously, that only those things are real which affect the bodily senses, then, as we saw at the outset, consequences will be drawn by different persons in two directions. Some will argue, all things that are real submit to physical tests, and it is inconceivable that the presence of Christ should be so tested; whatever is said about it, therefore, we must avoid the word *real*, which has so many bad associations. The Eucharist must therefore be a memorial, arousing in those who participate in it a sense of the presence of Christ. Others, feeling that this view does not adequately represent the language of Scripture, are precise in using the word *real*; and then

imperceptibly, as they dwell upon it, and reason round it, use phrases and associations which only belong to material reality. It must now be plain that neither of these positions is satisfactory. In the first place, neither is fully Scriptural. It is true that the Eucharist is a memorial of the death of Christ: but it is more than this. It has relations, as we have seen, with the whole order and existence of the Church; and it conveys a gift, which, however dependent for its full realization on the presence of faith and the absence of sin, is in no sense a personal or subjective emotion, but is *received* into the soul in communion. This point is grasped by the other class of minds. But the value and even the reality of the gift are indefinitely weakened by the (entirely unscriptural) use in connexion with it of associations drawn from the material world. Spiritual reality is not less but more real than material, if the phrase may be allowed, and it is a degradation of it to interpret it in terms of material existence.

The error which is common to both these points of view is the error of taking matter as the type of reality. It leads, as appears above, to unscriptural inferences and limitations. But it is also unsound philosophically. Though this may seem to be an unnecessary point to raise in this connexion, it is not without its importance. For the use of materialistic terminology to express Eucharistic doctrine, and still more, the sharp separation between the material and the spiritual world, is a cause of much confusion and scepticism.

To take this later point first, philosophical confusion must inevitably arise, unless room is made for the reality of spiritual things inside the area of ordinary thought. But this is overlooked in the course of daily life. We live necessarily in a piecemeal fashion. Our daily transactions with the world around us do not necessarily, or even naturally, lead beyond themselves. We can buy and sell, travel and work, feel pleasure and pain, without any binding necessity to explain our experiences. They are real to us; no one

ever questions their reality, or criticizes the account which we give of them. Partly from misdirected reverence, partly from lack of thought, the spiritual region of experience is held apart from all this near intelligible reality as something essentially different. Then comes philosophy, and undertakes to explain for us the reality of the experience of which we know most, and perhaps think most, and we find that it is apt to ignore or to deny the truth of the experiences of a spiritual kind to which we had given occasional attention. Our life, religious and mundane, does not form a single whole, but a pair of disparate worlds, lying side by side, with no reasoned bond of cohesion between them. We use up all our words for true and false, real and unreal, in the material world: and the associations of it haunt us still, whenever we use them. So when we turn round and give our attention to the other more rarely visited world of being, we are at a loss: we have nothing to say of it but negations. And that of which nothing

positive can be said is on the point of vanishing away.

Thus the rigid separation of the two worlds of experience leads to serious difficulty when its effects are considered. It relegates into an obscure and twilight region experiences which should be to us, as they were to the Hebrew Psalmists, no less true and valid than the events of our daily life. And this result provokes the further criticism that anything so separate, so unlike the course of ordinary events, must have too much of the imagination in it to be real. Here we touch the heart of the theory of reality which satisfies most men in the rough-and-ready intercourse with the world, and from which a large and important branch of philosophy takes its start. To be real it is assumed that a thing must come upon the mind entirely, as the phrase is, from without; if it can be shown that the mind itself in any way contributes to the resultant thought, then it is taken for granted that there is a dangerous element of subjectivity in it, which may easily mean

falsity. It is obvious that this does not matter in the course of daily life. We receive impressions which we certainly do not create; experiences reach us which we neither expect nor desire nor are able to control; there is no reason why we should do more than take them as they come. Liars consciously misrepresent facts; poets add something of their own to the mere facts which all see alike; and the ordinary man of matter-of-fact is on his guard against them both. The one annoys him, the other he does not understand. And there is, as we have said, a philosophy resting upon the same assumption, that the mind is merely a receiver in the process of knowledge; but it is in the end a sceptical and materialistic philosophy.

It must be admitted that this philosophy, and the assumption as to experience which underlies it, are at the present time under a cloud. The course of thought during the last century, especially, has tended to show that in every experience, however elementary, there is a real element of mental activity.

Various interpretations have been given to this principle, and inferences of various kinds have been drawn from it; and, though it is always precarious to affirm that any philosophical tenet is finally true, we may, perhaps, venture to assume so much as this; that whatever may conceivably be said of things as they are, apart from us we have no experience of reality except in terms of the human mind. Light, *for us*, is not in the least undulation of an ether, but a personal sensation of which the undulations of an ether are assumed as cause. And so with other experiences. There are none to which the mind, or, in the ordinary phrase, the faculties of the mind have contributed nothing; none, from which we are not entirely shut out, by a lack of the faculty necessary for their appreciation. Now this theory in no way affects the reality of that which we see and know. The sights and sounds of this world are the same for those who believe it and for those who do not. It only gives us a clearer notion of the way in which we

attain the knowledge of this real world, and forbids us to suppose that the proved intervention of the mind in the act of perception is necessarily of the nature of arbitrary imagination or deception. The truth of this world, like the truth of the world of spiritual reality, appeals to a mind prepared to receive it; and the consciousness of material as well as of spiritual reality involves an act of the perceiving self.

It is plain that if what has been here said is in any way tenable, something like unity of principle has been substituted for the rigid separation of the two worlds of reality, which, as we saw, is so mischievous. It is not possible here to work this point out in detail; but it is worth while to call attention to the fact that we are not, from this point of view, in presence of two disparate orders of being, of which one has certain principles and tests of reality, while of the other nothing can be said except that these principles and tests are invalid. Such a position is, as we have said, entirely intolerable. And what is more,

while the philosophical suggestions here made in no way go to *prove* the truth of the Scriptural account of things, they bring within the range of practical possibility that marvellous freedom of passing from one order of experience to another which is so profoundly characteristic of Hebrew religious thought. We experience no difficulty in the ordinary course of life in interpreting the utterances of one sense in terms of another. The same world appeals to us by our various senses; we have no difficulty in ascribing sight and sound, for instance, to the causation of a single "thing." In some measure this common experience affords a parallel for the treatment of the spiritual world. This, too, reaches us in our daily life, and appeals to a sense qualified to receive it. There is no reason why we should not accept its data as readily as we accept those of the material world. The main difference lies in the vastness of range over which spiritual experiences may be extended, and the capacity of the material world itself to convey suggestions

and appeals from the world beyond. It is in fact not so much a new body of truth approached by a new sense, as the underlying verity to which all truth ultimately leads. And the Eucharist is at once the supreme moment of such spiritual experience as this, and by its connexion with our Lord's command affords a degree of certainty in the experience which can be attained in no other way.

It is time to raise the question how far this view of the Holy Eucharist affects certain practical issues in modern times. We have considered the critical passages in Holy Scripture, and have inferred from them that this Sacrament is the central moment of Christ's intercourse with His Church on earth; and that there is given in it the assurance of whatever spiritual gift is involved in our union with Him. The participation in His Flesh and Blood which is essential to life is given in the Eucharist. It is a real gift and a spiritual gift; and the apprehension of it, though it be present and offered, demands a particular

spiritual condition. But the situation is not quite simple; for the Eucharist is a definite act, performed on behalf of the whole Body, by those appointed for the purpose. It is the cup solemnly blessed, the bread solemnly broken, which convey the gift, and no other; and thus we are brought directly into connexion with the problems of space and time. An act performed now and again by ministers ordained thereto, necessarily occurs at a particular place and occupies time; and this fact at once causes difficulty. Are we to say that, through the act, Christ becomes as it were locally, as well as spiritually, present? Does His coming take place at an assignable moment, before which He is not there? These are grave questions, which it were well, perhaps, to leave alone altogether, if it were not that upon the answer to them depends a whole series of practices which are continually in controversy among us. The adoration of Christ present in the sacramental elements, the practice of visiting the Blessed Sacrament reserved in Churches, such

services as Benediction, sometimes even the practice of fasting Communion, are all based upon a belief in a local presence depending on consecration at a particular moment in time. Before the words are spoken and the consecrating acts performed, the elements lie as yet incapable of any spiritual function; when the conditions are fulfilled, they bear and convey a spiritual burden. If these practices and doctrines are firmly based, there is no question how we are to interpret the connexion of this spiritual transaction with space and time. It enters into their limitations freely, and is defined by them like other human acts. We must now inquire whether this answer to the question is true?

There can be no question that as the duty is laid upon the Church of fulfilling the command of the Lord, some means must be taken of ensuring that the conditions involved in these are fulfilled. It cannot be left to conjecture to settle when the will of the Church as a whole is in operation and when it is not. The Communion is a social act

involving the whole Church, and it must be possible, therefore, to define tests by which the solemn act of worship shall be distinguished from casual and purely individual acts of devotion. This obvious practical need at once implies the necessity of particular time and place, and requires with almost equal cogency duly qualified representatives to act in the name of the Church. Those who take part in functions thus guarded and defined will have the assurance that they are in union with the Whole Body, and that they have access to the gift promised by our Lord. To this extent, at least, the very constitution of the Church, as a Body occupying a place in the visible world, makes it necessary that external conditions should be laid down and fulfilled, if the validity of the consecration, as we now speak, is to be assured. Within these limits there is little or no difficulty—or, more truly, no greater difficulty than is always created by the union of the material and spiritual. A faithful Christian who takes part in the Eucharist as

duly ordered by the Church, goes and makes communion, and knows that it is his fault if the grace given in the Sacrament fails to invigorate him. He has no hesitation as to the reality or completeness of the gift, or of the certainty of its administration. The necessity of the outward conditions is a practical necessity, and the practical correspondence with them leaves practical certainty in the mind.

Difficulties begin, however, as soon as it is attempted to draw logical inferences from the conditions which are necessary for, and intelligible to, practical requirements. Thus the question of adoration of the reserved Sacrament, or of the effect of attendance without communion are questions the solution of which can only come from the logical exposition of the normal act of worship. What is certain is that in the Eucharist, when it is duly performed, the promise of Christ is adequately fulfilled. Moreover, this is not a mere result of the individual efforts or of the individual faith;

Christ is present in response primarily to the faith of the Church, to which the minister so commissioned gives voice; He is received or excluded by each individual, the normal method of so doing being to receive the sacramental elements. It may be questioned whether precise decisions can be given beyond this. If they are given, it must be in view of logical inferences from that which is certain, or assumed to be certain; and it is well known that logic is a precarious tool in matters of theology. We will now endeavour to illustrate this statement, which, perhaps, savours of paradox.

A concrete act such as the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist presents to the mind a variety of aspects. In its completeness these are all combined into one single intelligible whole, which men realize and understand, so far as they understand it, as a whole. This characteristic belongs to all matters in which human life is concerned. For instance, there is no reasonable man so incapable as to be in serious doubt how to make his will

effective in the world. He may hesitate about the comparative merits of two or more lines of action, but when he has made up his mind he sets to work without any thought of the problems that lie round action. He knows that there are some things which he cannot do, that he always acts under restrictions and within limits; and unconsciously he allows for all these in what he does. But if an attempt is made to analyze the comparative force of compulsion and freedom in human action, then we know how tangled and unpromising a discussion arises. On the one side there arises a theory of action built upon the consciousness of freedom, on the other a similar theory in which the elements of necessity have greater weight. Both elements are present in the concrete act as it is done, and the combination of them occurs almost without sense of strain. But the theories try to explain one element in terms of the other, or to subordinate one to the other, or to produce an estimate of the amount which each con-

tributes to the finished act: and thus an insoluble antinomy arises. Both theories are, in all probability, logical and coherent; but they fail because they are simply logical expositions of one aspect or side of a thing that in practice has more aspects than one.

It will be seen that a result of this sort is more than possible in regard to the Eucharist. As we have described it, in its place in the worship of the Church, there are various elements combined. The Eucharist in its completeness is a single transaction, involving the action of Christ, of the Church, in the formal benediction of the oblations, and of the individual worshipper in the faithful reception of the consecrated elements. This is the normal form of the Eucharistic act, and there is no other suggested in Scripture. In experience these various elements meet us as a single whole. But, of course, they are capable of separation in thought and of logical development in separation. On the one side there are those who grasp with clear and firm faith the reality of that with which they

have to deal. They see that this depends, or seems to depend, upon the due performance by the Church of certain acts—acts which must necessarily take place in space and time. They seem to be recipients only in their part of the process; they forget, as men forget in speaking roughly of the experience of their senses, the function of their own spiritual faculties in union with the social act. And therefore they come to think of the elements as acquiring by the act of consecration a power, as it were, of standing alone: as becoming by themselves, in virtue of the act once performed over them, the vehicle of the gift which undoubtedly is promised through the Sacrament as a whole. The same course of reasoning affects the minister. He too comes to stand alone. His powers are no doubt bestowed upon him, but, after bestowal, they seem to be simply and solely his own. His acts seem to be done not so much in the name of a present and consentient Church, as in his own right, by virtue of powers which he possesses exclusively. And

thus the function of the worshipper, in some degree also the function of the Church as a whole, tends to disappear. And it seems as if the priest communicates to the elements, at a certain moment in time, a character which they retain independently of him and of the Church alike. Undoubtedly, if this theory, or anything like it, be a true one, the extremest practical consequences in the shape of adoration and the like, follow as a matter of course.

This is one point of view. And on the other hand, there are persons who approach the matter from a different aspect. They shrink from materialism, and from seeming to impose upon the action of God the binding limitations of space and time. It is the whole ceremony, not this or that detail in it, nor the fulfilment of this or that condition humanly devised, that makes the Sacrament. The other view seems to be mechanical; they find spirituality in something less definite and more vague. But here also there is peril. If the logical outcome of the one aspect of the Sacrament is materialism, the

logical outcome of the other is the denial of all Sacraments. A process which belongs to the order of the visible Church, to which definite matter has been assigned by our Lord Himself, of necessity involves some concession to the limitations of our sensuous experience. An act assigned to the Church in this world, performed by men under existing conditions, must be consummated in time; that is, there must be a moment at which it is complete, before which it is incomplete. How much exactly this means, it may not be possible to say, it may not be wise to try to say; but to deny it altogether because of the difficulty of precision is to break the link between the sacrament and the visible world—a thing which is really inconsistent with the appointment of an outward visible sign.

Something of the same sort may be said of the suppression of the worshipper in the priest. Due order and, still more, security of the distinction between true sacraments and private devotional efforts, require the use of definitely commissioned ministers. And

the function of the individual in regard to the whole process will be always relative to this need. It will not be possible for any individual to consecrate (in modern phrase) a valid Eucharist. But then, it may be impossible to say, what is the exact contribution of the priest to the whole valid act; not because his contribution is not real and positive in itself, but because the Eucharistic service meets us normally as a whole in which the separate strands of activity are inextricably intertwined. Whether S. Paul or S. John or any other of the Apostles could have thrown light upon these points we cannot say. They have not done so. S. John never mentions the Sacrament directly in the whole course of his writings; and S. Paul's mention of it, as we have seen, brings it before us in its completeness, as a communion in the Body and Blood of Christ, a sacrificial feast, by means of which we enter into a real communion with Christ; and, at the same time, a function of the Church as a whole, from the inward reality

of which individual men can bar themselves, if they will. We have already seen that there is no hint in the New Testament as to the way of applying such ideas as those of substance and accident in this connexion. It is equally true that there is no indication of the way in which those difficult notions of time and space are to be fitted into our conception of spiritual reality. That we should be right in adoring Christ in the Eucharist can hardly be disputed, seeing that in it, and through it, He comes to dwell within us. The Church has rightly regarded it as the supreme moment of spiritual life, and made it the occasion of the most comprehensive intercession. It is another question whether it is wise or even defensible to reserve consecrated elements in a Church in order to ensure His constant presence. That men should normally communicate fasting is a reasonable practical rule, tending to secure freedom from the intrusion of secular cares, and it is a natural habit of conformity to reasonable ecclesiastical order. But to deduce

it as an inference from the presence of our Lord in the elements, is more than doubtful, and easily becomes repulsive. These practices may seem to follow logically from the account here suggested of the Eucharist in itself, but the logic belongs to material things. In the world of ordinary experience an object concretely present remains until something causes its disappearance. We know what to make, say, of a book on the table; it occupies space, we can go away and leave it, and unless it is removed, we shall find it when we come back. All our daily experience is conceived in these terms. But it is an unwarranted assumption that these principles are applicable to so transcendent a reality as the Presence of Christ. The analogy of ordinary experience is the only ground for making such an assumption, and there is no evidence to show that the analogy is valid.

Some few words should be added upon the relation of such a discussion as this to the history of the doctrine in question, and on the much belauded but ill-defined virtue

of comprehensiveness in doctrine. In the preceding discussion much has been said of the meaning of Holy Scripture, and very little of the views on this question current at various times. This has been partly due to the desire to avoid a lengthy exposition, and partly to deliberate choice on other grounds. It seems to the writer that there is something unscientific in a mere catena of authorities. If the Church has deliberately formulated a decision, as in the case of the Nicene Creed, discussion must take account of such decision. But individual writers are valuable chiefly as indications of the state of opinion at their time, and of the way in which Holy Scripture has been interpreted in different ages. They need interpretation as necessarily as the words of Holy Scripture itself. Thus a mere list of statements on the one side or the other would be of slight value, while a discussion of them in relation to the thought of their time—which would be the true way of ascertaining their value—would be of inordinate length. There is the less reason to regret the absence of such

a discussion in this particular case, as the more precise and detailed statements in regard to the Blessed Sacrament are mainly mediæval, while the more general doctrine of the reality of the Presence is common from the most ancient times.

It is commonly maintained that the Church of England is conspicuous among all Churches for comprehensiveness of doctrine, and this seems to be frequently construed as meaning that a variety of incompatible doctrines may be held within its bounds, and that it is a departure from the characteristic position of the Church of England to attempt to distinguish them in point of truth. If this be the true meaning of comprehensiveness, the present essay stands condemned from the first. For we have made the attempt to compare a variety of popular notions with the idea of the Sacrament as we find it in Scripture, and we cannot admit that all have an equal right to be proclaimed and taught in the name of the Church of England. But we must take leave to deny with all strenuous-

ness that a "comprehensive" Church is one which has surrendered all responsibility for the truth of what is taught in its name. It is not like an immense cage, in which birds of every plumage, clean and unclean, have a right to roost. It is as definitely responsible for the truth of what it proclaims as a religious body which makes no claim to be inclusive; and the utmost limits of comprehensiveness must always exclude that which is false and that which is contradictory. These, however, are merely negative statements. On the positive side, comprehensiveness, as it seems to us, means a scrupulous care to include all elements of truth, and to leave none unexpressed, but, at the same time, to avoid giving the appearance of greater completeness to a doctrine than it can have by nature by rounding it off with plausible speculation.

Moreover, we cannot admit that the Church of England is "comprehensive," merely in the vague and negative sense. The doctrines included or implied, as well as those rejected

and ignored, are not the result of accident or arbitrary selection: there is in the Prayer-book a type of Eucharistic doctrine as distinctive as that in any other Service-book. And its special character is found in the disposition to emphasize what is Scripturally certain, and leave aside that which is inferential, and therefore in some measure precarious. Thus the Eucharistic office is conceived from the point of view of Communion: it is assumed that this is the normal object of those who come, and this normal use of the Sacrament, which Christ's command makes obligatory on Christian men, determines the regulations made for its due celebration. For this purpose the doctrine is adequately defined; but of the issues raised independently of this, some are decided negatively, others simply ignored. That is, the truths necessary to clear up and preserve the normal use of the Sacrament are comprehended and defined to the extent which circumstances allow, and no more. It is true that the Church does not explicitly condemn

those who hold part only of that which its language literally implies, and that it does explicitly condemn those who make certain additions to its teaching. But its representative position is that which is carried by the whole of its language, and not any irreducible minimum of doctrine beyond which the use of Sacraments at all would be unintelligible.

A doctrine that is in this sense comprehensive stands at a great disadvantage in many ways. It always seems vague where its rivals are clear; it holds back from deciding outlying issues, and often seems to decline positive statements without putting anything in their place. Hence it is especially at a loss in controversy. Controversy is rarely co-extensive with the whole area of the subject under discussion, but is apt to arise over single aspects of a whole question and to end in sharply-contrasted affirmation and negation. These are always more immediately satisfying and intelligible than the fuller statement of a many-sided truth. It is because the precise

definition in terms of matter, time and space of the mode of our Lord's Presence, and of various consequences from the Presence as thus conceived, seem to go beyond the limits of certain truth, and to trench upon the border of plausible speculation that we deprecate doctrinal and practical developments in this direction. It is because the view ascribed to Zwinglius, of the Sacrament as a mere sign and a mere memorial, ignores a large part, as it seems to us, of certain Scriptural teaching, that we deny it the right, not infrequently claimed for it, of being considered, *par excellence*, the Scriptural doctrine. It is true so far as it goes; but it is a fragment, and not the most considerable fragment, of the truth in Holy Scripture. Even the view which limits the Presence to the soul of the receiver, though it is immeasurably fuller and more comprehensive than the one just mentioned, seems to neglect the vitally important truth that the Church as a body is the agent in consecration, and responsible primarily for its effect. Christ's Presence corresponds to

the Church's faith: the individual avails himself of it or excludes it, he does not evoke it. To neglect this is to base religion upon an individualistic view of man, and would end in dispensing with the necessity of Church and Sacraments alike. A comprehensive view of the Eucharist will include all that these theories neglect. Though it will leave some things undefined upon which we would gladly have knowledge, it will certainly, as we think, maintain the true spiritual reality of the Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. This involves no evasion of the point at issue, nor is there any evasive limitation in the word *spiritual*. To have spiritual reality is, after all, to have the reality of God, for God is Spirit.

THE END

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